



# Northwest Veterinary Associates, Inc.

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## March 2018 Newsletter Prepared by Dr. Jen Hull

In last month's newsletter, Dr. Wadsworth mentioned that Northwest Vets would be offering a discounted rate for several bulk tank tests. We have decided to bundle four tests into one packaged price, which will give you a 20% savings on these four tests combined. The pathogens that we will be screening for are Mycoplasma, Salmonella dublin, BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus) and also a routine aerobic culture that will show any other pathogens present in the milk (such as Staph aureus, Strep ag, etc..)

### Why Bother??

We understand that milk prices are low right now, so why do we recommend spending money on lab tests? Because if these pathogens are present, and you can identify the cows that are causing the problem and remove them from the herd, it could dramatically increase your profitability. Staph aureus is contagious mastitis that spreads easily from cow to cow and is resistant to treatment! Not only do we waste money on antibiotics treating these cows, but Staph aureus also increases cell count in your bulk tank. Any of these mastitis pathogens can increase cell count, and that quality premium REALLY helps when milk prices are this low. Mycoplasma is also resistant to treatment, and not only causes mastitis issues, but can cause serious diseases in calves fed mycoplasma positive milk. BVD can wreak havoc on reproduction rates. Every day each cow is open, it costs you roughly \$4-8 a day. If you have these diseases in your herd, and we work together to identify them and get rid of the infected cows, you can increase your overall profitability as well as the quality of your milk.

### How does the testing work??

Your vet can take the samples directly from the bulk tank, one small sterile vial, and one 250ml container. Those get sent off to the lab, and we have the results back to you in roughly a week. They recommend no more than 400 cows in the tank at one time for sensitivity purposes, so larger farms might have to brainstorm with the herd vet how best to go about sampling. Because some cows will be dry or treated at the time of our initial sampling, and we want to be sure to include all of them, we recommend doing this testing more than once (ideally quarterly!)

### What do we do if there is a positive result??

There are many different ways to handle a positive result (for each of these pathogens), so working with the herd veterinarian to determine the best course of action will be necessary. Please reach out to your herd vet and ask them any questions you might have about these pathogens and our testing strategy!

## Free Cookie Friday!!

It's easy to get discouraged this time of year. The sun is getting warmer every day. Birds are arriving from their vacations south. Spring seems right around the corner.... and yet it won't stop snowing. ☺ Well, we'd like to brighten your day in the smallest of ways. Pop into the office on Friday, March 23 for a homemade cookie and glass of milk. We'll make the cookies – thanks for working so hard to make the milk!

